

Dear Esteemed Members of the Connecticut General Assembly Human Services Committee:

My name is Ana Zapata. I live in Meriden, Connecticut. It would be very excellent to have the right to free medical insurance, in this country, because in the first place we are sick. At times I don't have work, and it has been difficult because I don't have papers, and I have been treated with a lot of racism. Here in Meriden, you have to go place to place to find a clinic with doctors or dentists to treat you. I have not had children recently, but I remember that it would cost me too much to pay a dentist, one of the largest problems. Various places have denied me medical attention. These experiences were horrible, and I got really sick. One time they told me to come in person, and when I came, they said that they had just messaged me that they had not realized that I did not have insurance. And I directly had to and continue to pay money towards New Haven and the Yale-New Haven Hospital and you could not imagine how powerless I was because my economic situation was bad.

In the past year, I had two large operations, where when I went to the free clinic and explained I didn't have insurance and what was happening, and someone explained to me how to apply for free care, and then a doctor said I needed an emergency operation on my retina. So, they did all the papers and formalities for me, and called me. These amazing people did the formalities for me and I was able to get operated on twice. However, if I had not known about this free clinic, I would have been left blind. Because I have a history of 5 years without work due to issues with my spine and my boyfriend now has cancer, which has given us a lot of sadness.

I thank God for having found the clinic because I have been treated with a lot of love and care which I need. In contrast, a long time ago, my son was killed in an accident, and I was treated really badly for not having documents or insurance in this country.

I am in full support of HB 6616.